Adobe® After Effects® 6.5

The essential tool for motion graphics and visual effects

Product overview

Adobe After Effects 6.5 software delivers the speed, precision, and power you need to produce visually innovative motion graphics and effects for film, video, DVD, and the Web.

Work faster, work smarter

Impressive performance gains

OpenGL support
- Be more productive with performance optimizations such as OpenGL support for extremely fluid interactive compositing.

RAM preview
- Preview compositions in real time and benefit from OpenGL support, intelligent caching, dynamic previews, and the ability to define a region of interest for faster and longer RAM previews.

Disk caching
- Take advantage of disk caching to speed up your interactive work.

Windows® and Mac OS optimization
- Take advantage of better performance using the latest Intel® Pentium® based Windows hardware and PowerPC® G5 based Macintosh hardware.

Unmatched Adobe integration

Adobe Photoshop® CS integration
- Import Photoshop files as compositions, preserving layers, common layer effects, transfer modes, vector masks, 16-bit-per-channel color, text editability, and more.

Adobe Illustrator® CS integration
- Import Illustrator files as resolution-independent compositions with layers, transfer modes, and transparency intact. Apply effects directly to continuously rasterized layers.

Adobe Premiere® Pro integration
- Import Adobe Premiere Pro projects as compositions with clips arranged on layers and with edits, markers, cross-dissolves, opacity, motion keyframes, and more preserved (Windows only).

Adobe®

Adobe Encore™ DVD integration

- Easily add motion to static Adobe Encore menu designs in After Effects, save After Effects compositions as layered Photoshop files to use as menus in Adobe Encore, and designate subcompositions as buttons (Windows only).

Paths imported as masks

- Turn any Illustrator or Photoshop path into a mask or motion path for use on any layer.

Sizing imported layers

- Choose whether layers in Illustrator and Photoshop files import at their original size or at the same size as the composition.

Streamlined user interface

Easy to learn and use

- Learn as you work with Tool Tips, context-sensitive menus, and comprehensive online Help.

Familiar Adobe interface

- Build on your Adobe expertise: After Effects uses Adobe-standard tools, palettes, menus, and shortcuts.

Enhanced interface

- Work more intuitively with the mouse wheel to zoom and scroll, adjust the brightness of the After Effects interface, and more.

Parenting

Parent-child layers

- Create parent-child relationships between layers to efficiently apply transformations and other effects to multiple layers.

Automatic changes

- Animate the scale or position of a parent layer and automatically apply the behavior to its child layers.

Flexible media management

Cross-platform workflows

- Share projects and files across Windows and Macintosh platforms.

Post-render actions

- Use post-render actions to streamline back-end production tasks, such as creating proxies or replacing project footage with output from the Render Queue.

Resolution independence

- Mix multiple file resolutions from small thumbnails up to 30,000x30,000-pixel frames.

Convenient file management

- Use commands such as Find, Reveal, Reduce Project, and Collect Files to manage files easily.

Printable flowcharts

- View and print a flowchart of a composition or project to see how it's organized and what footage, layers, and effects are used.

Be visually innovative

2D and 3D compositing environment

Flexible compositing

- Work in 2D and 3D compositing modes, and mix 2D and 3D layers in a composition.

Cameras and lights for 3D compositions

- Create and animate multiple cameras and lights. Specify a point of interest, produce soft shadows, and simulate different types of lights.

Multiple 2D and 3D views

- See how layers interact in space and manipulate a composition from multiple perspectives using multiple views. Also save any number of views as a workspace.

Projection layers and colored shadows

- Project light through a layer to create colored shadows, stained-glass effects, and the look of projected slides.

Quick arrangement of multiple layers

- Use the Sequence Layers keyframe assistant to instantly stagger multiple layers in time, or the Align and Distribute tools to lay out layers spatially.

Unrivaled text animation

Direct text creation

- Create text directly in the Comp window using Adobe-standard tools for typing, editing, and formatting text. Mix and match fonts and other attributes on a layer.

Enhanced text animation

- Run text along any path, rotate or skew entire words or lines of text, set blend modes between characters, randomize the order of animation, and more.

Custom selectors

- Create custom selectors with Expressions for advanced control over text animations.

Text Animation Presets

- Save hours of animation time by instantly applying more than 250 professionally designed text Animation Presets, or create and save your own.

Animated Web text

- Export animated text as vector-based SWF files to create innovative, Web-friendly animations that load quickly.

Powerful animation and keyframing

Animation Presets

- Save any combination of animation parameters—including transformations, masks, Expressions, effects, and text—as Animation Presets to quickly reuse without setting keyframes.

Time remapping and frame blending

- Produce effects such as variable slow motion, frame stuttering, backward playback, and hold frames using time remapping and frame blending.

Motion blur

- Apply motion blur to moving layers to produce more realistic animations.

Expressions

- Create animations without using keyframes by defining Expressions that link the behavior of one layer property to that of another property on any layer in the composition.

Motion Sketch and Smoother

- Quickly create an animation path and set its velocity with Motion Sketch. Then fine-tune the shape and speed of the path with the Smoother.

Extensive visual effects

Comprehensive effects toolkit

- Turn your creative ideas into visually compelling and innovative compositions. Work with and animate more than 150 plug-ins to produce a limitless range of video and audio effects.

New visual effects plug-ins

- Add dramatic effects to your compositions with more than 60 new plug-ins, including Particle World, Light Burst, Light Sweep, and Toner. (These plug-ins are not included in Education versions of After Effects 6.5.)

Distortion effects

- Freely distort footage using a variety of effects, including brush-based Liquify effect tools similar to those in Photoshop and Illustrator.

Scribble

- Achieve a loose, hand-drawn look instantly by applying Scribble to a layer.

Expandable effects toolkit

- Expand your creative range by incorporating a broad selection of third-party effects into After Effects.

Versatile effects management

Unlimited effects

- Apply an unlimited number of effects to any layer. Even apply effects directly to continuously rasterized layers, such as imported Illustrator layers.

Effects palette

- Organize effects to suit you and quickly access them in the Effects palette.

Placeholders for missing effects

- Continue working on a project even when the effects it uses are missing from your system. Information about where each effect was applied and the settings it uses is preserved.

Adjustment layers

- Create adjustment layers, similar to those in Photoshop, to apply effects to any layers that appear below them.

Professional-quality audio

Auto sampling support

- Prepare and even resample audio using professional-quality sampling rates from 8kHz to 48kHz (Mac OS) or 8kHz to 96kHz (Windows).

Audio-to-keyframe conversion

- Create keyframes to represent audio.

Audio effects

- Remap audio over time and apply the Delay and Backwards audio effects. Adjust audio tone with Bass & Treble. And fine-tune audio levels precisely using VU meters with peak and clip indicators on the Audio palette.

Stereo Mixer

- Pan from the left speaker or channel to the right speaker or channel, or vice versa, with the Stereo Mixer.

Meet production challenges

Integrated vector paint tools

Nondestructive vector painting

- Paint nondestructively on layers to clean up footage, draw masks, and create animations based on Photoshop technology. Easily remove unwanted elements with cloning.

Photoshop style brushes

- Work with a Brush tool and Brush Tips palette similar to the ones in Photoshop. Customize brushes to control size, spacing, and angle, and save them for ongoing use.

Advanced Clone tool

- Remove unwanted elements from multiple frames more accurately using the advanced Clone tool, which offers five presets and the ability to simultaneously view the source frame as an overlay while you paint.

Animated paint strokes

- Animate individual paint strokes over time to change their size, position, or shape, and to create write-on and write-off effects.

Enhanced Eraser tool

- Control whether the Eraser tool removes paint strokes only or paint strokes plus the underlying background footage.

Wacom tablet support

- Use Wacom tablets to create a more hand-drawn look when painting in After Effects.

Comprehensive masking tools

Mask auto-tracing

- Quickly turn any channel, including alpha channels, into a vector-based mask, and quickly create animated masks.

Improved RotoBézier masks

- Get even more precise rotoscoping results with the new Convert Vertex tool, which lets you adjust the tension of RotoBézier masks by dragging on the vertices.

Unlimited masks

- Control which parts of a 2D or 3D layer are visible by adding and animating an unlimited number of masks on any layer.

Imported masks

- Import Photoshop and Illustrator paths as masks.

Mask animations

- Stroke, feather, transform, animate, and apply motion blur to masks over time.

Combined masks

- Apply Add, Subtract, Intersect, and Difference to combine masks. Shrink or expand masks to apply variable inner or outer feathering.

Masks from text

- Turn After Effects text into masks using the Create Outlines command.

Color correction tools

Advanced color correction

- Adjust colors on layers over time using color correction tools similar to those in Photoshop, including Brightness & Contrast, Channel Mixer, Color Balance, Levels, and more.

Color Finesse™
- Perform high-end telecine-style color corrections within After Effects using Color Finesse from Synthetic Aperture.

Shadows/Highlights effect
- Automate color correction over time while preserving the shadows and highlights within the frames using the new Photoshop style Shadows/Highlights effect.

Automatic adjustments
- Enhance the contrast of footage over time with the new Photoshop style Auto Color, Auto Contrast, and Auto Levels controls.

Curves controls
- Adjust the tonal range of an image with complete control—for example, decrease blues in the shadows and increase them in bright areas. Also import curve settings from Photoshop.

Hue/Saturation controls
- Adjust the hue, saturation, and lightness of individual color components on a layer. Adjust up to six separate user-defined hue ranges.

Keying and matte tools

Color Key
- Quickly eliminate all the pixels on a layer that are similar to a color you've specified. For example, cut out a green screen background in one step by specifying that color.

Color Range
- Use the Color Range key to eliminate a blue screen or green screen that's unevenly lit or contains varying shades of blue or green. Also key out other colors that you specify.

Luma Key
- Use the Luma Key to eliminate areas based on their luminance or brightness—for example, knock out contrasting dark and bright areas, such as black text on a yellow background.

Track mattes
- Turn any grayscale image, movie, or animated text or graphic into an alpha or luma track matte to control what's visible on another layer.

Rendering and output

Render Queue
- Use the powerful Render Queue to simultaneously render at multiple resolutions and file formats, or to batch-render files. Also create templates to apply common render settings.

Advanced 3D Renderer
- Render 3D compositions that include intersecting layers at the highest possible quality.

Field rendering
- Control field-rendering order for jitter-free playback on PAL and NTSC video systems.

FireWire video output
- Preview your compositions on NTSC and PAL video monitors whether you're using a Windows or a Mac OS X system.

Output frame rates and resolutions
- Specify output frame rates and resolutions (up to 30,000x30,000 pixels) to meet all international film and broadcast standards, including Cineon, HDTV, and more.

Pixel Aspect Ratios
- Compensate for non-square pixels in DV, D1, and other video formats using the Pixel Aspect Ratio settings.

Pulldown modes
- Translate files smoothly between film and video using the 3:2 Pulldown option. Choose the 24Pa Pulldown option for 24-frame progressive DV cameras.

Professional results

Extensive support for industry-standard formats
- Import and output files in QuickTime, AVI, MPEG-2, Windows Media™ 9, RealMedia, native Photoshop (PSD), Macromedia® Flash™ (SWF), Cineon, SGI, TIFF, TGA, Maya IFF, JPEG, ElectricImage, Filmstrip, PDF, or WAV and AIFF formats.

Web delivery options
- Export animations as compact SWF, Windows Media 9, RealMedia, or QuickTime streaming audio and video files.

DVD-ready files
- Create DVD-ready files by encoding your After Effects output in MPEG-2 format.

Print options
- Print flowcharts, project windows, and timelines directly from After Effects.

Gain new control with After Effects Professional

Powerful motion controls

Powerful Motion Tracker
- Zero in on any element with the fast, accurate Motion Tracker, which lets you use as many points as you like or standard one-, two-, and four-point settings; track change in scale or just horizontal or vertical movement; and edit the motion path.

Motion Stabilizer
- Track a single element on a layer to stabilize unwanted motion using the Motion Stabilizer, which is perfect for correcting handheld video shots.

Smart Mask Interpolation keyframe assistant
- Create a precise morph from one complex mask shape to another using the Smart Mask Interpolation keyframe assistant.

Wiggler
- Apply smooth or jagged changes to color, motion, or other effects over time with the Wiggler.

Exponential Scale tool
- Create natural-looking zoom effects by making linear changes of scale exponential with the Exponential Scale tool.

Additional keying and matte tools

Keylight
- Create Academy Award-quality mattes using the Keylight keyer. Built-in spill suppression, secondary mattes, and other tools make fine-tuning results easy.

Color Difference Key
- Use the Color Difference Key for superior control over hard-to-key images, such as those with windows, glasses of water, hair, and transparent regions containing smoke.

Spill Suppressor
- Use the Spill Suppressor to eliminate blue- or green-screen reflections on the elements.

Matte Choker
- Create a more natural edge between a person or object and the background image using the Matte Choker.

Difference Matte, Extract, and Linear Color Key
- Use Difference Matte, Extract, and the Linear Color Key to create clean, natural-looking composites by setting key criteria and then generating a range of transparency values based on how closely each pixel matches the criteria.

Additional keying tools
- Perform other sophisticated keying tasks using the Simple Choker, Alpha Levels, and Inner/Outer Key.

Advanced visual effects

Comprehensive warping and distortion effects
- Apply advanced warping and distortion effects to stretch, shrink, skew, and twist any layer. Use Mesh Warp, Reshape, Bézier Warp, Scatter, and Bulge to warp images.

Optics Compensation
- Easily rid footage of optical distortions from fish-eye lenses and other sources, or add such distortions when desirable.

Advanced particle system
- Simulate explosions, flocks of birds, swarms of bees, and more using a powerful particle system. Add behaviors such as repel and gravity to your animations. Any layer, even text, can be a particle.

Grain management
- Add grain to make video look more like film, or remove grain to give film the look of video, using the grain management tools.

Advanced Lightning
- Simulate animated electrical discharges using the sophisticated controls available with Advanced Lightning.

Fractal Noise
- Create textures and organic elements. Fractal Noise is perfect for simulating caustics, clouds, lava, flowing water, and gas.

Displacement Map
- Create a range of effects by displacing pixels on one layer to another using Displacement Map. For example, mirror a pattern from one layer on another and make it move around.

Glow
- Create glows and halo effects around an object.

Color Stabilizer
- Remove flicker from footage with the Color Stabilizer.

Automated production

Enhanced scripting
- Use scripts to automate management of the Render Queue as well as production tasks including changes to text and layers, creation of custom palettes, and more.

Render automation
- Work seamlessly with render management software to move jobs through the production pipeline more easily.

Network rendering
- Install unlimited copies of the Render Engine. Use them to monitor a Watch Folder on a network in order to automatically distribute rendering jobs to available computing resources.

Powerful 3D effects

Camera data

- Import camera data from Alias Maya and Discreet 3ds max and quickly composite new elements into a complex 3D scene.

3D Assistants Lite keyframe assistants

- Quickly arrange and animate 3D layers with the 3D Assistants Lite plug-ins from Digital Anarchy. Position 3D layers in cubes or tunnels, or distribute them in 3D space with ease.

3D channel effects

- Manipulate auxiliary channel information in imported 3D files, including RLA, Softimage PIC/ZPIC, Electric Image EI/EIZ, and RPF files.

Depth Matte

- Slice an image along the z axis and insert elements within 3D images with Depth Matte.

Depth of Field

- Use Depth of Field to simulate a camera focusing on one element in a 3D scene and letting surrounding elements blur.

ID Matte

- Isolate elements in a 3D scene for color correction or other effects with ID Matte.

Fog 3D

- Make distant elements in a 3D scene appear hazier or even disappear using Fog 3D.

3D Channel Extract

- Make auxiliary channel information visible as either grayscale or multichannel color images with 3D Channel Extract.

Zaxwerks 3D Invigorator Classic

- Easily create custom 3D elements and 3D text from 2D Illustrator files with the included Zaxwerks 3D Invigorator Classic plug-in. (This plug-in is not included in Education or volume licensing versions of After Effects 6.5 Professional.)

16-bit color support

Quality results

- Achieve maximum quality for film and HDTV using the broader range of colors available in the 16-bit color mode.

Flexible color modes

- Rough out a composition in 8-bit color mode, and then finalize and output it to 16-bit color for optimal quality. Toggle between 8-bit and 16-bit color on-the-fly.

16-bit effects

- Work with more than 90 effects that support 16-bit-per-channel color, including Alpha Levels, Blend, Bulge, Color Key, Colorama, Difference Matte, Glow, Luma Key, Radial Blur, and more.

AAF and OMF support

AAF support

- Import timelines from Adobe Premiere Pro using the Advanced Authoring Format (AAF).

OMF support

- Import and export Open Media Framework (OMF) media files to work with footage in Avid's native file format.

Additional high-quality audio effects

Flange & Chorus

- Add color and depth or make a single voice or instrument sound like many with Flange & Chorus.

High-Low Pass

- Remove high and low frequencies to enhance a sound, create special effects, or protect audio equipment with High-Low Pass.

Modulator

- Exercise precise control over audio delay and modulation by creating a variety of echo and chorus effects.

Parametric EQ

- Isolate specific frequency ranges for fine-tuning using Parametric EQ.

Reverb

- Simulate a spacious and acoustically live interior using Reverb.

Tone

- Create a variety of simple tonal sounds such as a swoosh, a doorbell, or a cacophony of beeps using Tone.

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7/04

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